

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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Oh No – Another Article On Giving!!!

By Steve Niemeier

There are several topics or subjects that we as members just do not want to hear a lesson on or read an article about. One of them is the subject of giving.

Giving is just not a popular topic – it is a challenging subject and it makes many of us uncomfortable. Of course every once in a while we may have performed a task or met a need and we are ready to talk about giving at that time. It should be pointed out that most of us are very responsive when there is a special need and this is very good. Yet the giving we need to consider is the giving God talks about and we are commanded to do on a regular or ongoing basis.

Paul tells the church at Corinth in II Corinthians 9:6 **“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.”**

Also, he explained in II Corinthians 8:1-7 that the

churches of Macedonia during a troubling time **“first gave themselves to the Lord”** If fact he states that they went beyond their ability! Just what does that mean? How does one give beyond their ability? Have any of us ever done that? Also, what does this purposing mean? Do I need to include giving in my monthly budget?

Jesus talks about giving in Matthew 25:31-46. The giving that he talks about is caring for the needy brother – one who was hungry – thirsty – naked – sick – in prison. He stated that when one took care of the least of His brethren then they had actually taken care of Jesus.

This is something that we constantly need reminding ourselves of – *taking care of one another as brethren is like taking care of Jesus.*

What happened in Acts 2? During the early days of the establishment of the church that Jesus died for – we are told in verse 44 & 45 **“Now ALL who believed and were together**

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and had all things in common, AND sold their possessions and goods and divided them among all as anyone had need.”

Those are penetrating words to our ears – a challenge to our way of thinking – we spend time trying to change the meaning of this – how could they sell their possessions – what was wrong with them – surely it doesn’t mean what it says!

About the time we convince ourselves that it really is not meaning what it says we read further and come to Acts 4:36-37. There we find Joses (Barnabas) and what does he do? He had land and sold it and brought the money and laid it at the Apostles feet! What was wrong with him? Again, we have to start convincing ourselves that this really doesn’t mean what it says. It surely means that he had more land and just sold some of it – nobody is going to sell all of their possessions including land and give it to the Lord or to the needy. Why then that person would be in need – this makes no sense to us!

Now remember the passage in Luke 21:1-4 about the widow with two mites? Jesus saw the rich putting in their gifts into the treasury and

yet this widow with only two mites gets recognition. Why? The Lord says she put in more than all – yet the others put in out of their abundance!

Now, remember that passage we used earlier in II Corinthians 8 about the churches of Macedonia and how they gave beyond their ability? Is it me or do we see a pattern here? The widow who gave all and churches who gave beyond their ability? Where am I in that mix?

The Bible contains statements such as we have mentioned and others that really point us in the right way to give. We have talents that we can give – we have time that we can give – we have money that we can give – we have food that we can give – we have the word of God that we can give.

Here is another article about giving and we need another lesson about giving – Why? The Lord in His Holy Word – has instructed us how to give and we need to be reminded of this – on a regular basis. Why? Because we forget!

Personal Evangelism

By Dan Barker

**What Is Your Heart's
Desire?**

In Romans 10: 1-3, Paul states his heart's desire and prayer to God was that Israel may be saved.

Knowing what we do about Paul, this desire of his is not surprising at all! He was born a Jew and was passionate about his role in Judaism from his birth. He received the best education in Jerusalem at the feet of the noted Gamaliel. He taught according to the strictness of the Jewish law and was zealous toward God (Acts 22:3). Paul was convinced that Jesus was a false teacher and was determined to "do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts. 26:9).

Paul's life took a major change when he came face to face with Jesus and learned that He really was the Christ (Acts 22:6-16). Paul obeys the gospel and after spending some days with the disciples at Damascus he immediately preached the Christ in the synagogues He preached Jesus was the Son of God (Acts 9:19-20).

After learning the truth,

Paul's heart's desire was to do everything he could to share this great news with his Jewish brethren. He had a love for this Jewish family and friends and he "deeply desired that they be saved!.

Note in Rom. 10:3 what Paul knew about Israel:

- 1) They have a zeal for God. but not according to knowledge.
- 2) They were ignorant of God's righteousness.
- 3) They were seeking to establish their own righteousness, having not submitted to the righteousness of God.

Even knowing what Paul did about Israel, that didn't stop him from trying to teach them! As we also know his involvement in personal evangelism often led to his extreme suffering for Christ (2 Cor. 11 :25-29)!

What's the point of all this for us? I think we must be honest and ask, "What is your heart's desire and prayer to God?" Is it for your family and friends, who just like Israel, are full of zeal but not according to the knowledge of the truth? They are full of zeal but

like Israel, are lost.

Here is a sobering thought: If you **don't make an effort to tell them about Jesus, who will?**

You might ask, "What can I do?" Here is a short list:

- 1) Invite your friends and family to Invite Night.
- 2) Set up a study with them or take them through the study yourself.
- 3) Set up a study with Dan or others here at Greenwood. You have brothers and sisters who are ready to help teach them.
- 4) Pray to God for them. Prayer is a powerful, powerful thing (Eph. 3:20-21).

So, what is your heart's desire? My prayer is for those you know, who are interested in spiritual things and that you will act on this desire **today!**

**invite Is
Tonight!**

The subject is "Can You See Tomorrow?" We have this afternoon left to invite – make

that call today!. This building should be full and every member should be inviting – if we invite enough there will be ones to accept!

**VBS - Starts
Tomorrow!**

**9:30 - 11:00
A.M.**

